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Chairman Wobbema and members of the Workforce Development Committee,

My name is Danielle Korsmo, and I serve as a member of the executive board for Student Government at the University of North Dakota (UND). I am providing testimony supporting HB 1241, relating to the workforce education innovation program; and to provide for a legislative management report.

Funding from HB 1241 for the workforce education innovation program would provide invaluable opportunities for North Dakota students to build their skillsets in an effort that directly aligns with the workforce needs of the state. Increased program offerings are an advantage for attending students of an institution to explore a variety of interests and have more options when considering a career path. As many students begin their educational journey without clear knowledge of what their future work may be, having options can be a deciding factor in choosing where to attend higher education. Expanding programs increases enrollment, but more importantly, it prepares students for the workforce needs in North Dakota.

This bill supports the development and expansion of programs specific to North Dakota needs by providing necessary funding for the state board of higher education to award institutions. High quality programs will prepare students not only for the current industry but to be successful in future growth. As written, the bill also promotes enhancement of partnerships with primary and secondary schools; connecting students in their early education is extremely beneficial to the trajectory of their learning. Building esteem and pride in our programs enhances the community, which is evident to prospective students and to graduates deciding where to employ their learned knowledge.

Chairman Wobbema and members of the Workforce Development committee, I respectfully request a **DO PASS on HB 1241**. Thank you for your consideration and time.

Danielle Korsmo
VP Chief of Staff, UND Student Government

